



## **GUIDELINES TO ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS**

Public records maintained by the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (hereinafter “Commission”) are available for public inspection according to the following procedures:

1. Requests for inspection or copying of public records:

a. Should be directed to:

**Public Records Request**

**Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission**

**1325 J St., Suite 1700**

**Sacramento, CA 95814**

**(916) 445-8696**

**[mhsoac@mhsoac.ca.gov](mailto:mhsoac@mhsoac.ca.gov)**

- b. Should be specific, focused, and not interfere with the ordinary business operations of the Commission. Where a request is not specific and focused, Commission staff will assist the requester to identify the requested information, describe the technology or physical location of the record(s), and provide suggestions on how to overcome practical barriers to disclosure. The operational function of the Commission will not be suspended to permit inspection of records during periods in which such records are reasonably required by Commission personnel in the performance of their duties. If the request requires review of numerous records, a mutually agreeable time should be established for the inspection of the records.
  - c. Should sufficiently describe the records so that they can be identified, located, and retrieved by Commission personnel.
  - d. Can be made orally or in writing; however, to insure accuracy in responding to a request for public records, the Commission encourages all requests to be submitted in writing or by electronic mail. You are not required to disclose your identity or the reason for the records request.
2. The Commission may refuse to disclose any records which are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act. (See, e.g., Gov. Code § 6254, et seq.)
3. Records are available for inspection during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. except holidays.

4. Inspection of records will be allowed upon conditions determined by the Commission. Upon either the completion of the inspection or the oral request of Commission personnel, the person conducting the inspection shall relinquish physical possession of the records. Persons inspecting Commission records shall not destroy, mutilate, deface, alter, or remove any such records from the Commission office. The Commission reserves the right to have Commission personnel present during the inspection of records in order to prevent loss or destruction of records.
5. If the request cannot be filled within 10 calendar days of receipt, the Commission will notify the requester that up to 14 additional calendar days may be needed to research the request. By the conclusion of this 14 day period, the Commission will notify the requester whether and when records will be produced. If some or all of the records requested cannot be released because they are considered confidential under law, the Commission will notify the requester what type of records they are and why they are confidential.
6. There is no charge to merely inspect records. There is no charge for records copied using equipment the requester brings to the Commission. The Commission may make copies for the requester when practicable; however, the fee for this service is 10 cents (\$0.10) per page. If the requester wants copies of electronic records, the Commission may e-mail the records at no cost, put the records onto removable media (e.g., CD, USB flash drive, etc.) provided by the requester, or upload files to a file hosting or cloud storage service identified by the requester. If the request requires the Commission to do special computer programming, perform data extraction, or construct a custom report, the requester will need to pay for the actual cost of time the Commission spends on the project, as well as the cost of any special supplies or services used. A requester must pay either by check or money order before the Commission commences with work. If the requester wants copies mailed, the Commission will not charge for first class mail. If the requester wants copies sent by any other method, or if special handling is involved, the requester will be responsible for the cost. A requester will only have to pay the fees mentioned above if the total is more than five dollars (\$5.00).
7. These guidelines shall be posted at the front desk of the Commission, and a free copy shall be provided upon request.